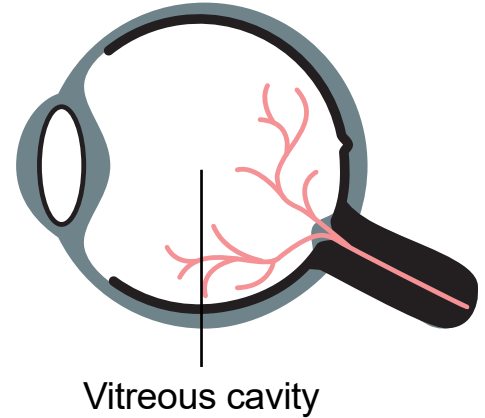


# Eye Injections: A Quick Guide

## What are eye injections?

You may hear your doctor refer to eye injections as intravitreal injections. The injection is a procedure where medication is placed directly into the vitreous cavity, which is a space at the back of your eye.<sup>1,2</sup> Injections are usually done in an office setting.<sup>1</sup>



## What types of medications are injected?

Your eye doctor may inject the following medications:

- Anti-VEGF (vascular endothelial growth factor) drugs
- Steroids (used during eye surgery)

## Eye conditions treated with injections may include:

### Wet age-related macular degeneration (wet AMD)

Fluid leaking from abnormal blood vessel growth

### Myopic choroidal neovascularization (CNV)

Severe near-sightedness leading to abnormal blood vessels forming

### Edema due to retinal vein occlusion (RVO)

Blockage of blood flow out of the retina

### Diabetic macular edema (DME)

Fluid leaking out of diabetic blood vessels

### Non-infectious uveitis

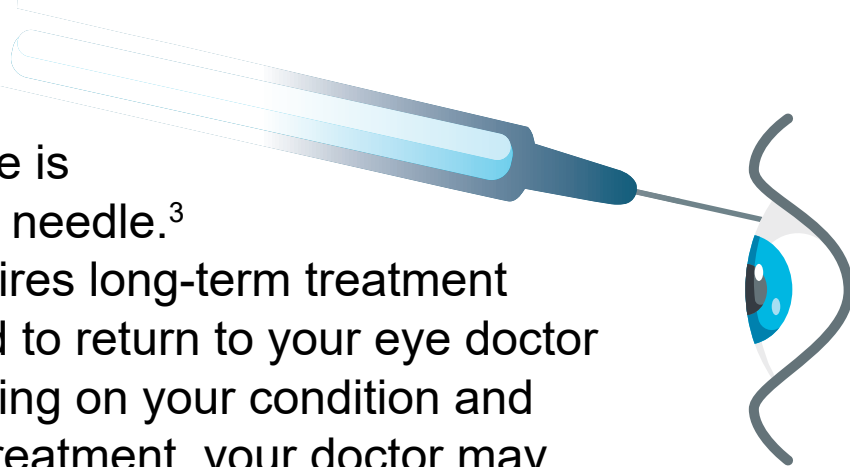
Inflammation inside the eye not caused by an eye infection

**It is important to attend all of your injection appointments to maximize your treatment outcomes.**

## The Injection Process

During an eye injection, medicine is injected into your eye with a thin needle.<sup>3</sup>

If you have a condition that requires long-term treatment with eye injections, you will need to return to your eye doctor for additional injections. Depending on your condition and how you are responding to the treatment, your doctor may change the length of time between injections.



## How do I prepare for an eye injection?

### Before

It may be helpful to have a “treatment buddy” to remind you of your appointments, to talk about your treatment with, and to review your doctors’ recommendations.



### During

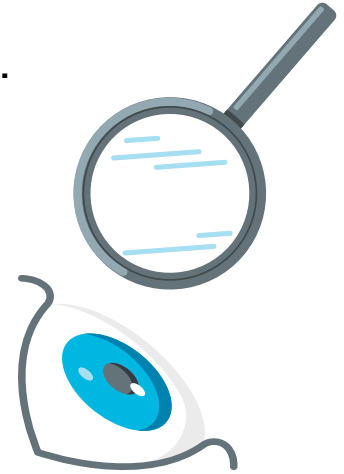
Every doctor will have their own specific process, but in general, you can expect the following:<sup>3-5</sup>

- A small clip (speculum) may be used to keep the eye open.
- The surface of your eye will be cleaned with a disinfectant eyewash to prevent infection.
- You will receive an eye drop to numb your eye to reduce or prevent pain from the injection.
- You will be seated in a slightly reclined chair.
- The medication is injected into your eye with a very thin needle.
- On the day of your injection, the appointment will have many parts to it including testing and treatment, but the injection itself will only last a few seconds.



## After

- You may feel like there is something in your eye. This can be soothed with artificial tears as often as needed.<sup>1</sup>
- You may notice the side of your eye can become very red after the injection. This is often just a drop of blood from the injection.
- You may notice black spots, flashing lights, or floaters in your vision.
- Your eye doctor will ask you to return to the clinic to check that the treatment is working for you.



This is not a complete list of possible side effects. Your doctor will tell you about possible side effects to watch out for, and in which cases you should contact them.

**Ask your doctor for recommendations on what to do or where to go if you experience any complications. You can make note of their response here:**



**TIP: A strong partnership with your eye doctor can help you to maximize your treatment outcomes. Follow their instructions, attend every appointment, and ensure you report any changes in your vision to your doctor right away.**

## How often will I need an eye injection?

Typically, injections are initially given once a month. Your doctor may then decide to give injections less often (every 2 to 4 months) depending on the medication, your condition, and how you are responding to treatment.

## Need help getting to or from your appointments?

If you need assistance getting to or from your eye injection appointments, 211 is available in all provinces and territories across Canada and can help connect you to local resources.



Call 2-1-1

Another option is the Vision Mate program offered by the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) which matches those who are blind or living with partial vision loss with volunteers who can provide 1-on-1 assistance with tasks and errands, such as getting to and from appointments.



To be matched with a volunteer, call 1-800-563-2642

1. "Intravitreal injections," American Society of Retina Specialists, accessed October 6, 2023, <https://www.asrs.org/patients/retinal-diseases/33/intravitreal-injections>
2. "Intravitreal injection," Medline Plus, accessed October 6, 2023, <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007629.htm>
3. "Anti-VEGF Treatments", American Academy of Ophthalmology, accessed August 30, 2023, <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/drugs/anti-vegf-treatments#:~:text=Anti%2DVEGF%20medicine%20blocks%20VEGF,it%20can%20even%20improve%20vision>
4. "Anti-VEGF intravitreal injection", Waterloo Regional Eye Program, accessed August 30, 2023, <https://www.waterlooeeye.ca/procedures/anti-vegf-intravitreal-injection>
5. "Anti-VEGF Treatments", Eye Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario, accessed August 30, 2023, <https://www.epso.ca/vision-health/eye-conditions/retinal-diseases/amd/amd-treatments/anti-vegf-treatments/#:~:text=Treatment%20with%20the%20anti%2DVEGF,your%20eye%20to%20reduce%20pain>

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